

Testimony of
David V. Hunter, Chief Executive Officer
The Mary Wade Home, New Haven
House Bill No. 5277: An Act Concerning Funding for Adult Day Care Centers
March 9, 2010

Thank you for this opportunity to support House Bill No. 5277, An Act Concerning Funding for Adult Day Care Centers and I ask the Members of the Select Committee on Aging to support the 10% rate increase for adult day centers that has been proposed in this Bill.

This funding increase is vital to support the 49 adult day centers in Connecticut and to deter the closing of more adult day centers. In the past 7 years 22 adult day centers have closed and the primary reason for the closures has been because the level of reimbursement by the state has not been enough to cover operating expenditures.¹

A key objective in the increased funding is to support the State's Long Term Care Plan to balance the long term care system in terms of the ratio of home and community-based and institutional care and offers individuals the services and supports of their choice in the least restrictive and most enhancing setting.²

I am fully aware of the regulations, costs and reimbursement systems associated with the full spectrum of long term care. Mary Wade provides a continuum of long term care that includes a state licensed residential care home(RCH), a skilled nursing facility(SNF), adult day center(ADC) and outpatient rehabilitation program.

I can attest to the many success stories throughout the years in which older citizens have been spared from premature admission, and in many cases, avoidance of placement in nursing homes due to the adult day center. Currently, Mary Wade's Adult Day Center serves 100 clients who are frail seniors. Annually, we admit fifty new clients, while discharging the same number.

The adult day centers are self-regulated by peer review through a program that was jointly developed by the Department of Public Health and the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Centers. I can assure you of the high quality that Connecticut's adult day centers are operating. Services include door-to-door assisted transportation services, specialized social and therapeutic recreational programs, medication administration, bathing, and specialized meals and snacks. Staffing ratios per number of clients are established, a specific amount of square feet per client is required, and a set number of bathroom facilities per client is also required. These guidelines are costly to provide particularly with respect to energy costs and health insurance.

During this past year, The Mary Wade Adult Day Center has been burdened with the high cost of electricity and especially gasoline for our vehicles which provide the transportation, which is an essential service in this field. Another significant cost factor we face is with absenteeism among adult day center participants. Unlike child care centers, where client days are pre-paid regardless of attendance, we are not able to be compensated for absent days. This is costly since we often find out clients are not coming only after the driver arrives at their home. We must also schedule

¹New Haven Register, "A home away from home", Friday, September 9, 2005.

²Long Term Care Plan, A Report to the General Assembly, 2010, pg 1.

staff according to the number of clients expected on a given day, and are unable to send staff home once we discover the number of clients who will be absent. The lost revenue due to due absences annually exceeds \$200,000.

Connecticut's adult day centers are serving the seniors in Connecticut through these programs, serving their families and serving the state taxpayers since participation in these programs are less expensive than institutional settings.

Please support the proposed rate increase for Adult Day Centers to ensure that this community-based option remains a viable choice for the seniors in our state.